

ALACHUA



COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

APR 2 AM 10 33
Sheriff Sadie Darnell
Post Office Box 5489 • Gainesville, FL 32627

March 31, 2014

Honorable Lee Pinkoson, Chair
Alachua County Commission
P.O. Box 5547
Gainesville, FL 32627

Honorable Ed Braddy, Mayor
City of Gainesville Commission
P.O. Box 490
Gainesville, FL 32627

Dear Chair Pinkoson and Mayor Braddy:

RE: Empowerment Center: Background Checks

Dear Commissioners:

I strongly urge you to consider having background checks on individuals who seek shelter at the proposed Empowerment Center. Individuals, employees and/or volunteers deserve to be as safe as possible when seeking shelter or serving those who do.

Most shelters require these checks for several reasons. The unfortunate reality of our society is that some individuals who are homeless suffer from mental illness, addiction(s) or both; that some criminals intentionally seek out vulnerable populations upon whom to victimize; and from a practical criminal justice standpoint, if someone is currently wanted locally or in another jurisdiction then having procedure(s) in place to notify the appropriate law enforcement entity is reasonable.

This is not to say that everyone who is homeless has committed a crime, is dangerous or should be denied services. However, having procedure(s) and plan(s) in place to best ensure safety for all makes sense.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sadie Darnell".

Sadie Darnell
Sheriff

3/30/14

SD/mrh

cc: CCCHA
C/MGR

(352) 367-4000